

REMARKS

Applicants note that the Examiner's indication that claims 1-3 and 8-15 are allowed is acknowledged.

In the Office Action, the indicated allowability of claims 5-7 and 17-18 was withdrawn in light of the rejection of claims 5-7 and 17-18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Applicants note that in the Amendment of November 7, 2003, applicants intended to rewrite claim 5 in independent form incorporating the features of parent claim 4 therein, but inadvertently did not delete the recitation of "according to claim 4". By the present amendment, claim 5 has now been properly amended to be in independent form by deleting "according to claim 4", such that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, should now be overcome, and allowance of claim 5 is requested.

With respect to claim 6, the Examiner has noted that in the Amendment of November 7, 2003, two versions of claim 6 were presented, wherein the first version presented claim 6 properly and represents claim 6 as written in independent form in the Amendment of February 13, 2003. In accordance with the listing as presented herein, claim 6 as written in independent form in the Amendment of February 13, 2003 is presented, it being noted that the second listed version of claim 6 was in error and does not appear herein. Thus, claim 6 written in independent form should now be in condition for allowance.

With respect to claim 7, by the present amendment, claim 7 has been written in independent form incorporating the features of parent claim 4 therein. Thus, applicants submit that claim 7 as written in independent form, should also now be in condition for allowance, in that such claim no longer depends from a canceled claim.

For the foregoing reasons, the rejection of claims 5-7 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, should now be overcome.

As to the rejection of claims 17 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, it is noted that claim 17 depends from 5 and claim 18 depends from claim 7, and in light of the amendments of claims 5 and 7, as presented herein, applicants submit that the rejection of claims 17 and 18 should now be overcome, and these claims should also be considered allowable.

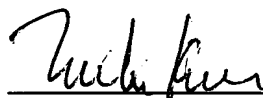
With respect to claim 16, which the Examiner has indicated as missing from the listing of claims, applicants note that applicants intended to cancel claim 16 in the Amendment of November 7, 2003, which has been effected by the present amendment, with the listing of the claims now showing claim 16 as being canceled.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicants submit that the rejection of claims 5-7 and 17-18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, has been overcome and the indicated allowability of such claims should be reinstated.

For the foregoing reasons, applicants submit that all claims remaining in this application should now be in condition for allowance, and issuance of an action of a favorable nature is courteously solicited.

To the extent necessary, applicant's petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (503.33612CX1) and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,



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